

**State of Vermont
Executive Department
A Proclamation**

WHEREAS, Vermont is ranked 43rd out of 50 states in the nation for prevalence of falls by the United Health Foundation 2015 Senior Report; and

WHEREAS, approximately 22% of Vermonters are 60 years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, Vermont's fall rate for persons age 65 and older of 32% is significantly higher than the national rate of 27%; and

WHEREAS, falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and account for 54.4% of TBI related deaths; and

WHEREAS, falls are the leading cause of injury-related deaths and hospitalizations; and

WHEREAS, falls and the fear of falling can lead to depression and hopelessness, loss of mobility, and loss of functional independence; and

Whereas, the Vermont Departments of Health, and Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living in partnership with the Vermont Falls Free Coalition, Emergency Medical Services and Area Agencies on Aging, encourages use of a free screening and evidence-based falls risk management program offered in communities around the state; and

WHEREAS, older adults can remain independent and reduce their chances of falling through regular exercises, reviewing their medication with a health care provider, having their eyes checked annually and making their home safer by installing safety devices; and

WHEREAS, unless Vermonters commit to effectively addressing this serious public health issue, the impact and cost of fall-related injuries and deaths will increase dramatically, as the population ages;

WHEREAS, I further encourage professionals, older adults, caregivers and family members to raise awareness and prevent falls by supporting evidence-based interventions, community partnerships and education to substantially reduce the number of falls.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Peter Shumlin, Governor, do hereby proclaim September 2015 as

FALLS PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH

in Vermont. I encourage all citizens in our state to join in this special observance.



Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont
on this 28th day of August, A.D. 2015

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'P' followed by a long horizontal line.

Peter Shumlin
Governor